

with an I.E.D. in Wardak Province while assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division out of Ft. Polk, LA.

Specialist James joined the U.S. Army in June of 2008. Upon completion of his training in November of 2009, Specialist James reported to Ft. Polk, LA. where he deployed with his unit in October 2010 to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Specialist James's impressive list of awards and decorations include the Bronze Star; Purple Heart; Army Commendation Medal; Army Achievement Medal; Army Good Conduct Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal; Overseas Service Ribbon; NATO Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Global War on Terrorism Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

Specialist James was a former student at Pine Ridge High School in Deltona where he was an accomplished athlete in Football, Basketball and Track. James was known as a good student who was well liked by those who knew him.

We shall never forget the ultimate sacrifice Specialist James has given for his country. His actions will serve as an everlasting reminder of the dedication and sacrifice the members of our nation's armed services make every day.

Specialist James is survived by his Aunt and Uncle.

#### HONORING COACH MEL TJEERDSMA

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 7, 2011*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of Northwest Missouri State University Football Coach Mel Tjeerdsma. Coach Tjeerdsma is one of the most successful and well respected coaches in the history of collegiate football, coaching Bearcat Football for 17 seasons. I join with the rest of the Bearcat Nation in congratulating Coach Tjeerdsma on his many years of success, contributions to the community and retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Coach Tjeerdsma orchestrated arguably the greatest football program transformations in the history of collegiate athletics. In his first season, Coach Tjeerdsma went from 0–11 in 1994 to 183–32 with three national championships and 12 conference championships. He coached 44 All-Americans, 119 All-MIAA student athletes, and 14 National Football League players. Coach Tjeerdsma's leadership and mentoring has made a difference in the lives of his student-athletes. Coach Tjeerdsma was recently recognized and inducted into the NCAA Division II Football Hall of Fame and the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, Coach Tjeerdsma is not only the Bearcat football program's all-time winningest coach, but his focus on the classroom is second to none for his student-athletes. Coach Tjeerdsma's teams have featured seven academic All-Americans and one National Scholar Athlete of the Year. Coach Tjeerdsma's football graduation rate is far above the national average of 53 percent with an impressive 85 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and the rest of the Bearcat Family in applauding

Coach Mel Tjeerdsma's outstanding achievements and contributions to the community and to the sport. We wish Coach Tjeerdsma and Carol the very best in years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO COL. CHARLES P. MURRAY, JR., AMERICAN HERO

#### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 7, 2011*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on August 12, 2011, one of the most outstanding patriots of America's Greatest Generation passed away. The beloved Col. Charles P. Murray, Jr., a Medal of Honor recipient of World War II who also served in Korea and Vietnam died peacefully at home in Columbia, South Carolina.

Colonel Chuck Murray was recognized by a thoughtful article on August 18, 2011, by Jeff Wilkinson of The State (August 18, 2011) newspaper of Columbia.

COL. CHARLES P. MURRAY REMEMBERED

(By Jeff Wilkinson)

Col. Charles P. Murray, Jr., a Medal of Honor recipient from World War II, was remembered Wednesday in Columbia as a humble hero who protected his men in battle, loved his family and worked tirelessly, until his death at age 89, to promote veterans' issues and educate students about patriotism and service to country.

"The word hero has never been about football players and movie stars," retired Col. Kevin Shwedo, a past deputy commander of Fort Jackson, said in a eulogy. "He defines what a hero is."

After being drafted in 1942, Murray, who grew up in Wilmington, N.C., landed on Omaha Beach in 1944 after D-Day and joined the 3rd Infantry Division in France.

On Dec. 16 near Kayserberg, France, the platoon that Murray was leading was pinned down on a ridge under heavy fire by 200 well-entrenched Germans. Murray, using a variety of weapons, killed 20 enemy soldiers and captured 10 more, single-handedly driving the Germans from the position. At the end of his assault, a German grenade riddled him with shrapnel, wounding him in eight places. He spent only four days recovering at a medical aid station before "borrowing" a uniform and returning to his unit.

None of the other men in his platoon was injured.

"His focus was keeping his men safe," Shwedo said. "And he kept his men safe."

Murray, awarded the Medal of Honor for that action, also received three Silver Stars and two Bronze Stars for other acts of valor.

Murray's flag-draped coffin was carried by horse-drawn caisson from Dunbar Funeral Home to the First Presbyterian Church, a few blocks away. It was accompanied by pallbearers from the Arlington Cemetery's "Old Guard," the Army's oldest active-duty infantry unit. Murray once was deputy commander of the unit, best known, perhaps, for maintaining a 24-hour-a-day vigil at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery.

Honorary pallbearers included four Medal of Honor recipients—Sgt. John F. Baker Jr. of Columbia, Maj. Gen. James E. Livingston of Charleston, Sgt. Maj. Robert M. Patterson of Raleigh, N.C., and Col. Walter J. "Joe" Marm of Fremont, N.C.—as well as members of Murray's VFW Post 641. Also participating were a color guard and about 40 members of the 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Stewart, Ga., Murray's unit in World War II.

Murray died of congestive heart failure Friday, six weeks after having a pacemaker implanted. He passed away in his bed while taking a nap, family members said.

Murray is survived by his wife, Anne, son Brian of Fort Payne, Ala., and daughter Cynthia Anne of Roswell, Ga. Another son, Charles P. Murray III, of Columbia passed away in 2004.

About 600 people attended the memorial service.

More stood quietly outside on the sidewalk throughout the service to see Murray's remains pass by on the way to and from the church. "I wanted to pay my respects," said Dick Rosenbeck of Columbia, a four-year veteran of the U. S. Air Force.

Inside, dignitaries included Fort Jackson commander Maj. Gen. James Milano, U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson of Springdale and Col. Ted Bell of Columbia, one of The Citadel's most decorated graduates from World War II.

Bell was on the faculty of the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga., after the war with Murray, a close friend.

"I thought he would be a big ol' dumb fella coming in there with all his exploits, but he had a brilliant mind," said Bell, 91, who received the Distinguished Service Cross and Silver Star while fighting in the Pacific. "He was a fine person. A fine family man. And he was one of the greatest heroes we've ever known. There is no question about it."

The Service of Worship for the Remembrance of and Thanksgiving for the Life of Col. Charles P. Murray, Jr., September 26, 1921–August 12, 2011, on August 17, 2011, was conducted at the historic First Presbyterian Church (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Denomination) established in 1795. This was the boyhood church of President Woodrow Wilson and his parents Reverend and Mrs. Joseph R. Wilson are buried in the Churchyard with Ann Pamela Cunningham who, in 1853, founded the Mount Vernon Ladies Association which purchased and preserved Mount Vernon.

The following biography and citation were published in the program:

CHARLES P. MURRAY, JR.

Charles P. Murray, Jr., entered the Army from Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1942, attended Infantry OCS and was commissioned 2d. Lt. in 1943. He served during WWII in France, Germany and Austria with 3d Infantry Division. His final combat assignment was as a brigade commander in Vietnam, where he served with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and 9th Infantry Division. His awards include the Medal of Honor, the Silver Star (3 OLC), Legion of Merit (3 OLC), Bronze Star (OLC), Air Medal (6 OLC), Purple Heart, French Legion of Honor and Croix de Guerre, and various Republic of Vietnam commendation and service medals. He attended National War College and has degrees from University of North Carolina and George Washington University.

CITATION FOR THE MEDAL OF HONOR

For commanding Company C, 30th Infantry, displaying supreme courage and heroic initiative near Kayserberg, France, on 16 December 1944, while leading a reinforced platoon into enemy territory. Descending into a valley beneath hilltop positions held by our troops, he observed a force of 200 Germans pouring deadly mortar, bazooka, machinegun, and small arms fire into an American battalion occupying the crest of the ridge. The enemy's position in a sunken road, though hidden from the ridge, was open to a flank attack by 1st Lt. Murray's patrol but he hesitated to commit so small a force to battle with the superior and strongly disposed enemy. Crawling out ahead of his troops to a vantage point, he called by radio for artillery fire. His shells bracketed the